

Section 62A Planning Application: S62A/22/0006 Berden Hall Farm, Ginns Road, Berden

Objection to updated application.

Dear Inspector,

This development will cause significant, long lasting harm to local heritage sites, the landscape, precious resource farmland used for food production and offers nothing of value to the community or the wider need for renewable energy sources that cannot be sited and supplied more productively and less harmfully elsewhere.

There are several heritage sites near the proposed site that will be affected, their context significantly harmed for decades if not permanently. This includes a scheduled ancient monument, The Crump. Berden Hall, Grade 2 listed building and the beautiful Berden Church, St Nicholas, a Grade 1 listed building.

There is no equivalent development in the area, indeed a similar development nearby (Pelham Spring Solar Farm) was refused last year on the grounds of erosion of the agricultural landscape by Planning Inspector Mr Callum Parker.

Many Public Rights of Way would no longer be country walks, but surrounded by an industrialised landscape. These amenities would lose their positive attribute to our communities and indeed cause negative harm to the mental health and well-being of many villagers.

Statera propose to industrialise 177 acres of farmland, 72% of which is a precious and finite resource in our Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land for food production. This surely negates any renewable energy benefits the applicant projects. There is no need to lose a precious, irreplaceable resource when there are many other less damaging options for renewable energy production. 250,000 hectares of south facing commercial roofing being just one. The Powering Up Britain, Energy Security Plan encourages ground-mounted solar to be mainly on brown field, industrial, low and medium grade farmland. In the first instance the Plan prefers Rooftop Solar. Likely understanding that it is dangerous to take good farmland out of food production, especially at a time of climate insecurity and increased war.

The NPPF changed in December 2023. More importance has been given to the protection of land for food production and a greater emphasis on the need to look for sites that do not negatively impact our future food security. I believe

the applicant has not demonstrated a full search for alternative sites.

Last year the Government changed the planning and development rights for home owners and businesses to more easily install solar panels. This strongly implies a much greater emphasis on rooftop solar installations that not only find better drainage, already hard surfaces and easy access, but do not cause harm in their installation. This offers employment and business building opportunity and supplies energy at the point of need as well as feeding back to the grid.

I thank you for your time in reading my objection update. I hope you find against Statera's application that will undoubtedly cause more harm than any projected benefits. Our renewable energy sources must and can be developed intelligently with as little harm as possible and all of us in mind.

Regards
Sarah Wright